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Pulitzer-Prize Winning Scientist Speaks on the Importance of Pollinators

Washington, D.C. (June 18, 2007) World-famous scientist Edward O. Wilson will lend his support to a continental coalition of pollinator advocates by speaking about the important role that birds, bees, butterflies, and other pollinating animals play in agriculture, ecosystems, and biodiversity.

Dr. Wilson's appearance at the USDA on June 27th will coincide with National Pollinator Week, a project of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC). Designated as June 24-30 by the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Pollinator Week is designed to publicize the importance of pollinators and to call on the public to take action to support pollinator health and abundance. **The event is open to the public, although seating is limited. For reservations, contact eow@nappc.org.**

Best known for his Pulitzer-Prize-winning sociobiological work, *On Human Nature*, Dr. Wilson is also a biodiversity expert and the recipient of the highest award given in the field of ecology, the Crafoord Prize, the ecological equivalent of the Nobel Prize. He agreed to participate in National Pollinator Week to spread awareness of the essential role that pollinators play in ecosystem health. Pollinators enable the reproduction of 85% of flowering plants and provide us with an estimated one-third of our food supply.

"National Pollinator Week will focus on promoting actions that help pollinators," said Laurie Davies Adams, who manages NAPPC. "Through habitat destruction, misuse of pesticides, and pollution, humans have provoked a decline in many species of pollinators, which play an essential role in the reproduction of flowering plants both on farms and in the wild."

National Pollinator Week comes when pollinators have been in the news. Recently, much media attention has been focused on the mysterious disappearance of tens of thousands of honey bee colonies, a phenomenon known as Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD).

"CCD and honey bees are just the tip of the 'pollination iceberg,'" said Adams. "The health of nearly 4,000 other species of bees in the U.S., as well as butterflies, bats, birds, beetles, and other pollinators require immediate attention."

Dr. Wilson's National Pollinator Week presentation will include actions that the public can take to support wild as well as managed pollinator populations in their own communities.

For more information about Dr. Wilson's appearance and other National Pollinator Week events, visit www.pollinator.org.

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